

## ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a method of treating a crude oil comprising a step of separating the crude oil by distillation where the crude oil is separated by distillation into a distillate oil and a heavy oil content, a step of thermal cracking where the heavy oil content separated at said step of separating the crude oil by distillation and obtained substantially from the bottom is thermally cracked to lighten the content, and a step of separating the thermal cracking product by distillation where the thermal cracking product obtained by lightening at said step of thermal cracking is separated by distillation; wherein said step of separating the crude oil by distillation and step of separating the thermal cracking product by distillation are carried out, at the same time, in a distilling section comprising a vacuum distillation apparatus. Accordingly, it is possible to simplify the process and save the space, and thereby to reduce a cost for the treatment. In addition, the method is also applicable to a small-scale refining of petroleum.